

UPDATE

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Filner Sponsors Bill to End Employment Discrimination

By Richard Wood
Editor

SAN DIEGO — Congressman Bob Filner on September 24 agreed to co-sponsor the Employment Non Discrimination Act (ENDA) authored by Representatives Christopher Shays, R-CT, and Barney Frank, D-MA. The bill ensures that personnel decisions are made on the basis of employee performance and qualification, not sexual orientation.

"In 36 states across this nation, it remains legal to fire someone based solely on their sexual orientation," said Filner. "This is ridiculous! It's time for us to bring federal law out of the dark ages!" As a personal sign of his commitment to the issue, he also signed a non-discrimination pledge guaranteeing that "the sexual orientation and gender identity or expression of an individual is not a consideration in the hiring, promoting, or terminating of an employee in my office."

The New Jersey-based Chubb Corporation also announced its support for ENDA on September 22. "It is in our best interest as

a business to create environments that recognize and respect the uniqueness of individuals, and foster personal and corporate achievement," said John J. Degnan, Vice Chairman and Chief Administrative Officer. "We encourage members of Congress to work on the passage of the bill."

In endorsing the bill, Chubb joins with 94 other corporate supporters. The company has a long tradition of fostering a culture of inclusion and non-discrimination as it was one of the first to extend a broad range of employee benefits programs to domestic partners including health coverage, bereavement leave, and adoption benefits. Chubb's homeowners policy is one of the few insurance policies to enable both members of a gay or lesbian couple to be named as insureds.

A recent survey of 250 of America's largest companies revealed that 95% of them already include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies. "Corporate America has already embraced this policy because it makes good business sense," concluded Filner. "It's time that we make it the law of the land."